

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 9, 1893, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. (Fine letter G.H.G.)
Twin Oaks, West Washington, D. C. June 9, 1893. My dear Alec:

I am very much troubled about that barn at Crescent Grove. The more I think about it the more unhappy I am. Nothing has been said to me about it by any one here, in fact we say very little about Baddeck, because Grace cannot bear the thought of leaving Mamma. But I cannot help feeling that it is very unfriendly to Mr. and Mrs. Kennan to put up a horse barn close to their bathing place. It is of far more consequence to them that their bathing place should be kept clean and sweet than it would be to us for bathing is their principal occupation. They go in morning and noon and for aught I know night also. Would they not even have the right at law to compel us to remove the building as a nuisance? You may have thought of all this and taken measures to prevent any nuisance by draining away, but I do not know. I wish I had thought of this when we talked the matter over, but I did not. Mr. McCurdy thinks it too late now as the barn is begun, but I would rather go to the expense of removing it than violate your motto, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." Would you that your neighbor should ruin a place to which you look for your chief entertainment and source of health. I say nothing of Grace and Charlie's family because they can come over to us, and they are not in Baddeck very long, the injustice to them is not so great, but still it is not fair to them. Do please move that barn somewhere else, say across the road near the confines of Crescent Grove and Charlie's place. I am sure it will not increase the difficulty of selling Crescent Grove to have the barn on it either near the fence or at the old barn place, rather the contrary, for who wants Crescent Grove without a small barn. The big one would I admit because it was so large, but not a small one. If it does I will buy it myself, I have two hundred dollars that Papa gave me and I never spent and I will spend that, only please don't run the slightest risk of damaging

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another's property. I really don't dare to go and see Mrs. Kennan, I feel so mean. I know I am working myself up about nothing, of course you will not do anything that you think will hurt any one else, but perhaps you have not thought of it and realized it. You wouldn't like to go bathing in water where you might see horse dung floating about, or even think you might possibly .

Major Powell was out today and desired me to say all nice things to you and especially not to let you forget gravitation. Oh my dear, I do long for you, you big dear old boy, it seems ages when you said goodbye. At the same time my heart is sore about my darling Mother. She sees so little and it is so hard for her, although she makes no complaint, only "I can't see any more, it's no use trying." Papa keeps trying to coax her to the rambles over the place she so enjoyed, but they give her no pleasure now, she can't see the blossoming plants or the beautiful forms of trees or shrubs. She finds life very stupid because there is nothing she can do. One by one she is giving up her favorite occupations. Every morning a great tray of roses is brought her in the dining room and she arranges them in vases, but again and again she will stop and say "It's no use I can't see" and then go on again. This done there seems to be nothing for her to do. Yesterday she found she could peel the pasteboard off photographs she wanted mounted in a book and she was so pleased, she said she was very busy she was all right. It is harder for her than most people of her age, because she has always been so intensely independent, she never would let any one do a thing for her that she could do herself. Do you wonder it is hard for me to leave her?

I have been taking photographs all day. Mamma said those I took years ago were the prettiest she ever saw and wanted me to take some of this place.

I am tired now, so good night, I love you, Yours, Mabel.